

INITIAL POLICY REVIEW: Language Access Ordinance (#230868)

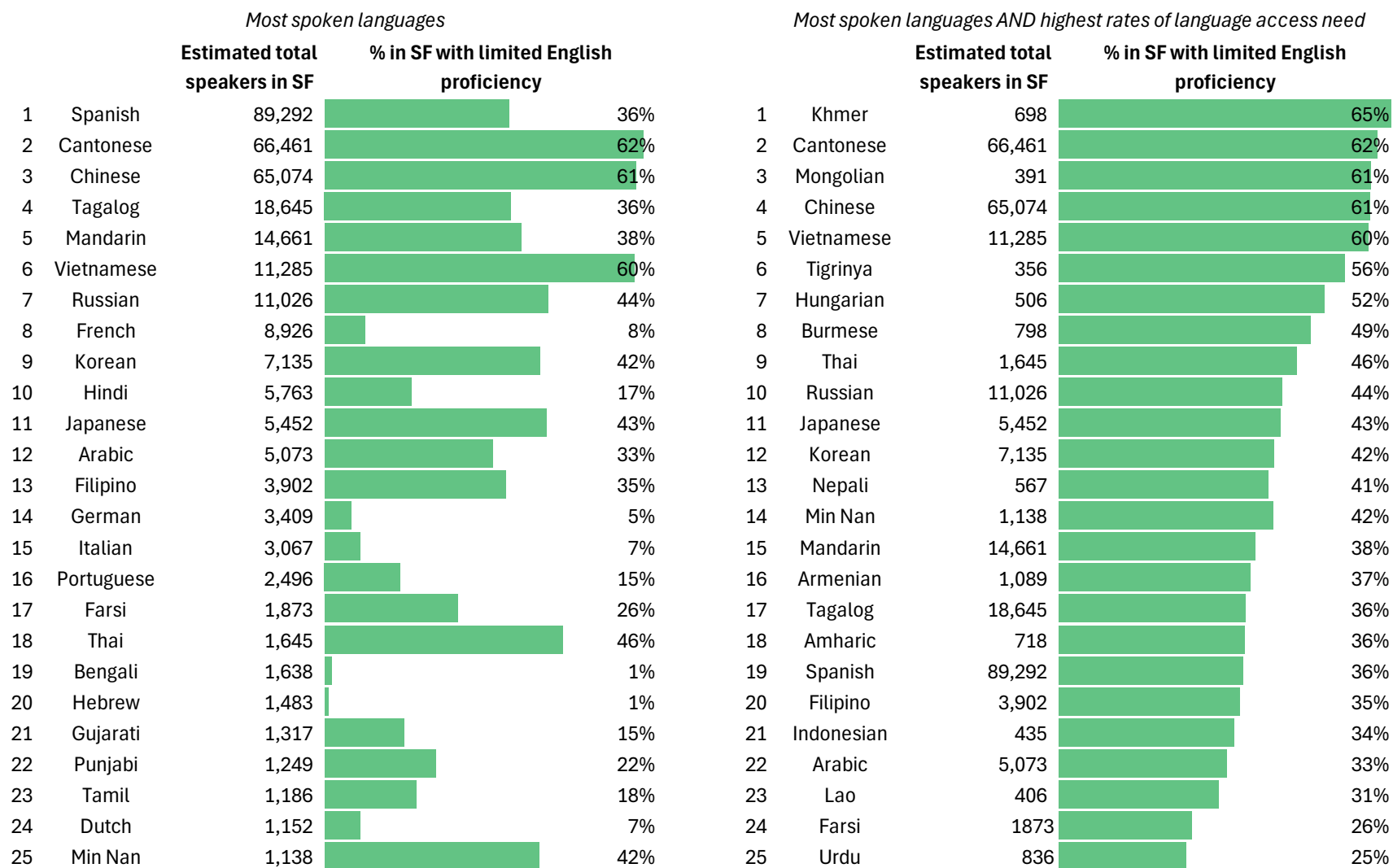
Recommendations

- Align statewide crisis/disaster response threshold to local threshold:
 - Replace “5% of population” with “***required languages and languages with a substantial number of LEP persons in San Francisco, as well as any additional languages in the district that are most spoken and have the highest rates of language access need.***”
- Refine requirement for translating Know Your Rights information:
 - Replace “20 most spoken languages in San Francisco” with “20 languages in San Francisco ***that are most spoken and have the highest rates of language access need.***”
- Refine definition of “vital information” to include: “***bills, fees, fines, penalties.***”
- Emphasize support for American Indian, Central and South American, and Oceanian languages.

Key issues for consideration

- **City information is shared most efficiently when we serve communities that have the highest rates of language access need, not just the most individual speakers.**
 - Departments should be encouraged to focus on communities with **high percentages of limited English proficiency** and **linguistic isolation** (a federal measure of households where no adult speaks English “very well”). Social service organizations have expressed that language access is a matter of “life and death” for these communities. *See attachment for comparison.*
- **The new statewide language threshold for crisis/disaster response is less robust than the existing San Francisco language threshold.**
 - The new statewide requirement is “5% of the population.” At the citywide population level, this would include **only Spanish and Chinese**; at a district population level, this would include **only Chinese in most districts, and no languages in others.** *See attachment for estimates by district.*
- **Language access for American Indian, Central and South American, and Oceanian communities is an important part of restoring their right to self-determination.**
 - In California, households that speak Indigenous languages have the highest rates of linguistic isolation (e.g., **53% for Central and South American languages; 15% for Native North American languages**). However, the American Community Survey – the most frequently used source of language data – samples only a small number of people and undercounts these households in San Francisco. *See attachment for California-wide estimates.*
- **The most impactful update to the ordinance is requiring departments to translate vital information into additional languages upon request.**
 - This amendment creates a pathway for everyone who lives, works, or attends school in San Francisco to receive vital information in their language.
 - In contrast, changing the required language threshold from “10,000 LEP persons” to “6,000 LEP persons” would likely add only a single language – Vietnamese – because of the ongoing displacement of communities of color from San Francisco to the wider Bay Area.

RELATIVE LANGUAGE ACCESS NEED IN SAN FRANCISCO (2021 5-YEAR AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY)



Note: Chart excludes languages where 2021 ACS has estimated there are fewer than 300 speakers in San Francisco.

PROJECTED LANGUAGES REQUIRED FOR CRISIS / DISASTER RESPONSE GIVEN 2.5% AND 5% THRESHOLDS FOR SAN FRANCISCO DISTRICT POPULATION (2022 5-YEAR AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY VIA OCEIA)

Estimated people with limited English proficiency by Supervisorial District (number and % of District residents)

	District 1		District 2		District 3		District 4		District 5		District 6	
Arabic	161	0.2%	5	0.0%	99	0.1%	63	0.1%	573	0.7%	282	0.4%
Chinese	8,128	10.7%	768	1.0%	13,468	17.0%	14,316	18.8%	3,450	4.1%	4,997	6.6%
Filipino	274	0.4%	93	0.1%	211	0.3%	560	0.7%	1,039	1.2%	548	0.7%
French	61	0.1%	117	0.2%	64	0.1%	214	0.3%	179	0.2%	99	0.1%
German	21	0.0%	8	0.0%	45	0.1%	12	0.0%	37	0.0%	0	0.0%
Korean	517	0.7%	83	0.1%	410	0.5%	237	0.3%	1,077	1.3%	131	0.2%
Russian	1,325	1.7%	315	0.4%	524	0.7%	416	0.5%	1,049	1.3%	177	0.2%
Spanish	481	0.6%	614	0.8%	1,118	1.4%	883	1.2%	2,112	2.5%	2,297	3.0%
Vietnamese	664	0.9%	111	0.1%	109	0.1%	781	1.0%	1,670	2.0%	403	0.5%
Population	75,727		75,950		79,301		75,998		83,506		76,009	

	District 7		District 8		District 9		District 10		District 11	
Arabic	43	0.1%	0	0.0%	4	0.0%	0	0.0%	63	0.1%
Chinese	5,938	7.5%	812	1.0%	5,280	6.5%	12,250	14.9%	17,464	21.1%
Filipino	399	0.5%	168	0.2%	1,047	1.3%	951	1.2%	2,455	3.0%
French	13	0.0%	96	0.1%	49	0.1%	27	0.0%	23	0.0%
German	27	0.0%	61	0.1%	10	0.0%	6	0.0%	20	0.0%
Korean	290	0.4%	53	0.1%	26	0.0%	111	0.1%	76	0.1%
Russian	671	0.9%	161	0.2%	25	0.0%	114	0.1%	90	0.1%
Spanish	925	1.2%	1,262	1.5%	8,418	10.3%	4,765	5.8%	6,785	8.2%
Vietnamese	529	0.7%	175	0.2%	474	0.6%	1,127	1.4%	748	0.9%
Population	78,689		83,420		81,563		82,146		82,684	

Legend

Meets 5% of District threshold

Meets 2.5% of District threshold

MOST LINGUISTICALLY ISOLATED COMMUNITIES IN CALIFORNIA (2021 5-YEAR AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY)

**% of households that are linguistically isolated
(no adult in household speaks English "very well")**

